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NEWS HEADLINES

Manila's Papaya Princess

(Source: Washington Post News Online – 3/05/08)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/04/AR2008030402486.html>



In the Loop

Al Kamen, Columnist

U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines *Kristie A. Kenney* is hugely popular in [Manila](#). There's speculation in the press that she might even win the presidency there if she were eligible to run.

Some of her popularity may relate to her diplomatic skills, especially her efforts to restart stalled peace talks between the government and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the southern [Philippines](#).

She was spotted a couple of weeks ago at the main rebel base, where she met with rebel chief *Al-Haj Murad Ebrahim*, reportedly to press him on talks to finally end the rebellion, which began in 1978.

Or maybe the career diplomat's superstar status has more to do with her dancing the "papaya" a few months ago on the TV game show hosted by *Edu Manzano*. He is credited with making the papaya a nationwide dance craze, possibly because, as he said recently, "it does not take any degree of expertise."

A clip of Kenney doing the dance -- quite well, it appears -- has become something of a [YouTube](#) sensation.